

Selections and Comments.

AID OF THE SPIRIT.—A writer in the *Pacific Methodist* takes the ground that while a few of the heathen who follow the best light they have may be saved, the great body of them will be lost. In speaking of their choice he says:

God's Spirit is everywhere to aid in this choice. But the Old Testament and the Spirit alike had need of Philip to decide the purpose of the eunuch. The vision by the way and the learning of Paul needed the help of Ananias. Jesus, standing on the shores of Macedonia, pleaded with the man Paul to come over and help. So everywhere an integral factor in turning the human will to God is a human helper—one who knows God. The honor, the shame, the glory, the tragic responsibility, is ours.

God's Spirit is everywhere to aid in this choice that his word goes. His Spirit and word are inseparably connected, and hence where the word does not go, the Spirit is not found to convert the people. Hence the need of Philip and other primitive preachers, and hence the necessity of preachers now to apply both the word and the Spirit. If the Spirit went out independently of the word to convert and save people, we would most certainly expect him to go to the heathen who are without the word. But as we have no such evidence of the Spirit's operation, let us realize that the heathen are lost; and in order to save them, we must carry them the bread of life.

A FOOLISH QUESTION.—The *Catholic Sentinel*, among other foolish things it has to say about the *HERALD*, asks this question:

Pray, brother, who treasured the New Testament ere your sect and the many other isms sprang into existence?

Not the Catholic Church surely, for that "sect" to which we belong, founded by Christ and the apostles, existed hundreds of years before a Pope was ever heard of, and will continue to exist long after the "Man of Sin" has been destroyed by the power of God. "Pray, brother," tell us who wrested the New Testament from an ignorant and wicked priestcraft and put it into the hands of the people, thus giving liberty and enlightenment to the nations of the earth? The idea that the world is to-day indebted to the Church of Rome for the Word of God is ridiculous. The many sects and isms of which our neighbor com-

plains are the legitimate daughters and granddaughters of the "Mother of Harlots."

OUR BELIEF.—Much is said now-a-days about the need of a gospel free of technicalities, free of traditions, of the barnacles—as some say—which have become attached to it as it has sailed over the sea of theology. Some have even ventured so far as to declare that the need of the time is to turn away from Paul and return to Christ. We do not like, indeed thoroughly dislike that form of phraseology. It is not ours; we quote the words certain men are fond of using. We like to say St. Paul or Paul the Apostle, and our Lord Jesus or our Lord Jesus Christ; but the talkers of religious slang speak of Paul and Christ, and unfortunately some of them are popular and win applause.

What is the meaning of all this outcry against traditional dogmas, and barnacles, and so on? What the cry that we must return to the simple Gospel? Does it not intend to disparage and reduce the Epistles of the New Testament to an inferior position? Is that according to the mind of our Lord, as He expressed it? He graciously promised His Church that He, going away, would send the Holy Spirit to "guide" His people "into all truth." In fulfilment of this engagement He gave His Holy Spirit to the Apostles John, James, Peter and Paul. They were inspired by the Spirit

sent by the Lord Jesus to unfold truth to His Church or they did not tell the truth, for they claimed this very thing. Is it then the will of our Redeemer, the Light of the World, that we turn our backs upon the doctrinal epistles? But these are too profound, too high and too deep for men at large! Let us have first the simple Gospel, and then let us give the doctrinal epistles to advanced Christians as they can bear them! But consider that these letters were written to a young, weak, comparatively ignorant Church, a Church just gathered out of heathenism and the cold, dead formalism of Judaism. These letters are what our Lord as soon as He had ascended inspired men to write to the young and inexperienced Church. Can the intelligent world and Church of the present day afford to put them in an inferior position? Besides, and we may as well speak plainly, the assertion that the Epistles have been exalted above the Gospels, and that there

has been an excess of doctrinal preaching to the men of this generation, is not true. It is as untrue as can be. The exact opposite

has been true so far as these assertions relate to doctrinal preaching and teaching. The truth is there has been a deficiency, a lack of doctrinal preaching, and the instruction of the children and youth has not been in doctrines, has been an instruction in the International Lessons and not in the Catechism. The result here in the United States has not been satisfactory, not even to those who declaim against doctrinal instruction.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

PRIMITIVE PRACTICE.—Is it possible to improve on the practice of the Apostles and Primitive Evangelists in preaching the Gospel and winning souls to Christ? These

were at least conscious that they acted under the immediate authority of their risen Lord, and consequently they spoke and acted as though there was no doubt as to the truthfulness of all they said and did. But many preachers in these days do not use the language of entire confidence when dealing with the unconverted. There is altogether too much limping, halting and hesitating in both word and action. The Primitive preachers were sure of their steps, and they never used the language of circumlocution. When sinners asked what they must do to be saved, the answer was always ready, short, to the point, simple, and exactly in harmony with the great commission given by the Divine Master. The modern practice is faulty in nearly all these respects. New methods and new expedients have been invented, while the old truth is either sadly neglected or almost entirely perverted. In fact, the weakest point of modern Christianity is its failure to recognize Apostolic precept and example in dealing with inquiring souls. What is really most of all needed in these degenerate days is a holy courage which is willing to leave the popular current for the small but pure stream which comes down from the Primitive Church. Which one of the evangelists of all who are preaching in England to-day trusts implicitly to the guidance of the Divine Spirit as set forth in the preaching of the Apostles? We should like to publish a list of the men who are brave enough to follow without deviation just what the Holy Spirit has pointed out as

the whole truth in regard to salvation.—*Christian Commonwealth.*

POLICY IN RELIGION.—Men are their own interpreters before the world, often without meaning to be, of the motives that govern them. They are unconscious expounders of themselves, of their secret thoughts and intents. Solomon was right when he said: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." From the records of men's lives it is not difficult to frame, with a fair degree of accuracy, an analysis of their motives. It does not need very extensive observation of men and things; it does not require very large knowledge of human nature and affairs to justify the conclusion that the Church is sometimes patronized for purposes of self-aggrandizement. Membership is sought for the sake of social prestige, commercial gain, or political preferment. The Church is made a convenient vehicle of conveyance into fashionable society, civil office, or mercantile success. Rome is joined for her vote. To own a pew in a Fifth avenue church is a passport to Fifth avenue society. Communion with the saints means, to some minds, customers in the store. It is hardly possible to conceive of a greater wrong and sin than to prostitute religion to these base ends. Mr. By-Ends and Mr. Money-Love in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," thought that a man might use religion for such purposes, "and yet be a right honest man." But Christian gave them all that they deserved when he said: "If it be unlawful to follow Christ for loaves, as it is, how much more abominable is it to make Him and religion a stalking-horse to get and enjoy the world? Nor do we find any other than heathen, hypocrites, devils and witches that are of this opinion."—*Christian Intelligencer.*

Original Contributions.

BIBLE TALKS.

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It would seem from the narrative given us in the book of Job, that the angels, called here the sons of God, on set occasions, to honor God reverentially presented themselves enmass before him. On one of these occasions Satan also appeared among them. God recognized him, and inquired where he had come from, and received the reply,